

TRANSNATIONAL ISLAM AND MUSLIM POLITICS

POLICIES, IDENTITIES, AND IDEOLOGIES

Editors
Ahmet Körođlu
Baptiste Brodard



**TRANSNATIONAL ISLAM AND
MUSLIM POLITICS**
POLICIES, IDENTITIES, AND IDEOLOGIES

Editors

Ahmet KÖROĞLU

Istanbul University, Faculty of Economics, Department of Political Science Istanbul, Türkiye

Baptiste BRODARD

*International Islamic University Malaysia, Faculty of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences,
Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Gombak, Malaysia*



Published by
Istanbul University Press
Istanbul University Central Campus IUPress Office,
34452 Beyazıt, Fatih / İstanbul - Türkiye



<https://iupress.istanbul.edu.tr>

Transnational Islam and Muslim Politics
Policies, Identities, and Ideologies
Editors: Ahmet KÖROĞLU, Baptiste BRODARD

E-ISBN: 978-605-07-1581-1

DOI: 10.26650/B/SS30AA25.2024.003

Istanbul University Publication No: 5336

Faculty of Economics Publication No: 670

Published Online in January, 2024

It is recommended that a reference to the DOI is included when citing this work.

This work is published online under the terms of Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0)
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	iv
CHAPTER 1 The Boundaries of Belonging a Nation: Hajj as a Transnational Interaction for the Turkish Pilgrims Ahmet KÖROĞLU	1
CHAPTER 2 Analyzing Push and Pull Factors for the Sustainable Impact of Inbound International Muslims in Malaysia: An Emerging Diaspora of Integrated Transnational Islam Shamima Raihan MANZOOR, Abdullah Al MAHMUD	19
CHAPTER 3 Ideological Dispute Between Purist Salafis and Islam Nusantara in the Indonesian Islamic Discourse: Jurgen Habermas' Perspective on Discourse Theory Muhammad ARIF.....	41
CHAPTER 4 Globalization Of Transnational Religious Capacities: A Strategy Towards The Islamic Ummah: Investigating The Great Arba'in Religious Event Ehsan Amini BAGHBADERANI	59
CHAPTER 5 Digital Ummah and Novel Ways of Belonging: The Case of the Pakistani Diaspora Community in Athens, Greece Inam Ullah LEGHARI	75
CHAPTER 6 Transnational Islam in Pakistan: A Case Study of Rohingya Muslims Riaz Ahmad SAEED	89
CHAPTER 7 European Converts' Quest for Transnational Connectivity With the Islamic Ummah Jaweeda MANSOUR	109
CHAPTER 8 From Transnational Islamic Movements to Individual Religiosity: The Crisis of Religious Authority in Western European Muslim Communities Baptiste BRODARD	127
CHAPTER 9 A Challenges to Muslim Identity in Transnational Spaces: A Comparative Study of Diaspora Fictions After 9/11 Sajaudeen Nijamodeen CHAPPARBAN	149

INTRODUCTION

This book titled *Transnational Islam and Muslim Politics: Policies, Identities, and Ideologies* combines the important contributions of various researchers who've presented their intellectual endeavor on transnational Islam. As a result, this book represents a bold transversal reflection on recent evolutions in transnational Islam by delving into its various dimensions in the realms of politics, identity, and ideology. This book seeks to explore the complexities and dynamics of transnational Islam as a phenomenon that transcends national borders by linking Muslims from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds as well as from different ideological and theological influences. Aside from the chapters expounding on various expressions of Sunnism, the volume also integrates a contribution on Shiite Islam. The authors of the volume are distinguished researchers from different corners of the world, each bringing their unique expertise and perspectives to the table. A brief glance at the book's various chapters reveals this wide diversity of geographical and cultural focus.

Titled "*The Boundaries of Belonging a Nation: Hajj as a Transnational Interaction for the Turkish Pilgrims*" the first chapter addresses Turkish pilgrims' experience of Hajj from a sociological perspective. Among other points, Dr. Ahmet Koroğlu questions the perspective of their identity as influenced by the dichotomy between the Turkish national identity and integration into the global Ummah. This first chapter goes straight to the heart of the issue by connecting a national expression of Islam with an opening toward the transnational community of the Ummah. In this context, this encounter between the Turkish Muslim identity and the global Muslim identity takes place within the specific framework of the Hajj, the pilgrimage that has brought Muslims together from around the world, representing various cultures and regions since the early days of Islam. Right from the start, Dr. Ahmat Koroğlu's paper allows us to reflect on this ambivalence between the national religious identity as seen in the case of Turkey and a broader integration into the global and borderless community of believers, the Ummah.

Shamima Raihan Manzoor and Abdullah Al Mahmud's chapter "*Analyzing the Push-Pull Factors for the Sustainable Impact of Inbound International Muslims in Malaysia: An Emerging Diaspora of Integrated Transnational Islam*" explores the current challenges of Muslim migrations and transnational Islam in the context of Malaysia, an issue often neglected by the literature. Focusing on international migrants coming from diverse countries, Chapter 2 questions the emergence of a transnational Islamic diaspora based on surveys and in-depth interviews, with 100 international Muslims residing in Malaysia having been surveyed to nurture this reflection, as well as several in-depth interviews conducted by the researchers. Using various methods, this collection of data has allowed the authors to articulate a relevant analysis of the rise in transnational Islamic civil society in the particular context of Malaysia, a multi-confessional and multi-ethnic nation that has increasingly attracted Muslim migrants coming from various countries all around the world.

The third chapter covers Dr. Muhammad Arif's paper, which discusses the ideological dispute between transnational Salafism and the traditionalist local movement Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in the context of Indonesia, not far from Malaysia. Founded in the beginning of the 20th century, Nahdatul Ulama (NU) has succeeded in becoming a major Islamic movement representative of local traditional Islam in the country. The rise of Salafism over the last two decades through the use of the Internet and social media threatened NU's legitimacy and

INTRODUCTION

raised new challenges for local Muslims confronting a diversification of Islamic discourses. In response, NU elaborated the concept of *Islam Nusantara* (local Islam), which opposes the transnational and foreign influence of Salafism. One of the ideas the dichotomization of religious discourses between these two movements challenges is that of a unified Ummah in Indonesia and beyond. Reflecting on this issue, Arif's paper also expounds on the ways Islamic discourses mutually shape one another.

The question of transnational Islam concerns not only the Sunni world but also Shiite countries. While Iran is the country with the most Shiite Muslims, Iraq is home to the pilgrimage sites of Najaf and Kerbala, which attract Muslims from other countries every year. Chapter 4 contains Ehsan Amini Baghbaderani's work titled "*Globalization of Transnational Religious Capacities; A Strategy Towards the Islamic*," which investigates the great Arbaeen religious event in this regard. He argues the Arbaeen community to have evolved into a transnational ritual characterized by its indigenous and intercultural elements, making it a potential focal point for fostering unity among the Islamic Ummah. Elaborating upon the case of the Arbaeen phenomenon, this paper sheds light on its significance in the pursuit of Islamic charity in the context of globalization.

Another chapter explores the issues regarding the migrations and transformations of the Muslim diaspora. Dr. Inam Ullah Leghari from the Quaid-i-Azam University of Islamabad, Pakistan dedicates his chapter on Pakistani migrants in Greece. The Pakistani diaspora has become one of the most significant immigrant groups to recently settle in Greece. The first part of his paper focuses on the Pakistani diaspora in Athens based on ethnographic fieldwork. The author then addresses the question of the transformation of the forms of communities and the Ummah, exploring the theme of religious identity and transnationalism based on the example of the Punjabi Barelvi Sufis who've settled in Greece. In this regard, Chapter 5 will show how the transnational Sufi Barelvi missionary movement, known as *Dawat-e-Islami*, has used information and communication technologies (ICTs) to construct a community and illustrate another manifestation of what transnational Islam could mean.

While Pakistan is the origin of diverse diasporas worldwide, it also hosts migrants trying to flee from conflicts and find asylum. Dr. Riaz Ahmad Saeed dedicates his paper titled "*Transnational Islam in Pakistan: A Case Study of Rohingya Muslims*" to the challenges faced by the Rohingya migrants living in the country. The Rohingya crisis is a major transnational challenge because many of them have been forced to leave Burma due to discrimination and violence. They seek refuge in countries such as Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Malaysia. They've encounter various problems in Pakistan, such as not having citizenship because Pakistan views them as Bengali (originating from Bangladesh), while Bangladesh views them as Burmese citizens. Over the years, the Rohingya people have faced statelessness, violence, and killings that even involve women and children and are severe violations of human rights and international agreements. This study aims to look at their current situation concerning education, job opportunities, and healthcare in their host countries. Unfortunately, they live in poor conditions and struggle in many areas of Pakistan, Bangladesh, and India. The pressing need exists to grant them citizenship and protect their human rights in these countries. The paper relies on analytical and historical research and uses a qualitative approach to explore these issues and connect them with the broader question of transnational Islam.

INTRODUCTION

Mansour's chapter 7 "*European Converts' Quest for Transnational Connectivity with the Islamic Ummah*" will then address the case of "converts" as members of the Muslim Ummah in the West. While Islam is still majorly perceived as a 'non-white' religion and negatively portrayed in the West, white converts may have to bring a positive contribution these stereotypes. Mansour's paper aims to foster understanding of converts' perception of Ummah. Moreover, the author argues that converts undergo a re-racializing process where they become 'non-white' or 'not-quite-white' and losing accessibility for white privilege the way they had it before". Moreover, they face challenge with dominant ethnic groups from Muslim backgrounds, which may consider them as "others" and fail to integrate them in mainstream Muslim communities. To address these issues and others, the study argues for a transnational collaborative partnership that foster inclusivity within Muslim communities. Eventually, this process would participate in the revitalization of the essence of the Ummah.

Chapter 8 is Baptiste Brodard's work titled "*From Transnational Islamic Movements in Western Europe to New Ways of Understanding Islam: Between Normative Authorities and Individual Religiosity*" expounds on the recent transformation of Islamic organizations in Western Europe over the past few decades. Muslim communities in the West have undergone distinct religious phases. Initially, Islamic associations are reliant on institutions from the migrants' home countries. In the second stage, the emergence of Islamic organizations affiliated with transnational religious movements, such as Tabligh, the Muslim Brotherhood, and Salafist movements, cater specifically to the young Muslims born in these countries. This new religious landscape represents a significant divergence from the Islamic practices followed by migrant parents, as it involves active engagement within society and a rejection of ethnic boundaries. A novel category of local and grassroots associations surfaces in the third stage, and these are often driven by youth and largely independent of established Islamic movements. These three stages of development have formed a common trajectory across various countries over the past three decades. The primary objective of this paper is twofold: firstly, it seeks to analyze the recent shifts in Islamic ideological influences within mosques and religious discourses in Western Europe over recent years with a focus on the transitions between these three phases. Secondly, this study seeks to address the new challenges arising from the waning influence of traditional authorities, coupled with the rise of personalized discourses on Islam and the proliferation of diverse religious offerings.

The final chapter is written by Dr. Sajaudeen Nijamodeen Chapparban and titled "Challenges to Muslim Identity in Transnational Spaces: A Comparative Study of Diaspora Fictions after 9/11." It aims to analyze the responses Muslim writers from different diaspora have provided to the negative discourses against Muslims and Islam as broadcast through both political and intellectual debates. Indeed, the increasing terrorist attacks perpetrated by organizations identified as Muslim have contributed to shaping an association between Islam and violence, bringing new vocabulary into the public sphere for concepts such as jihad, Sharia, kafir, and others. Consequently, public discourses have highlighted the so-called risks of Islamization and Islamic extremism and ultimately conveyed a negative image of Islam based on biased arguments. In this regard, Muslim identity, and the visibility of Muslims (e.g., the wearing of the hijab) have come under the spotlight of racial and cultural discriminations in Western societies. In response, Muslim writers have developed discourses to challenge these negative stereotypes and projections regarding Muslims after the 9/11 attacks. In

INTRODUCTION

brief, Chapter 9 argues that, despite the ongoing international propaganda against Muslims, several authors have been able to resist and reclaim their identities in order to expose the biasness in the contemporary discourses against Islam and Muslims.

In brief, these nine chapters express the diverse realities of transnational Islam in the current age and highlight through various illustrations how Muslims face common and diverging challenges across different countries and cultures. Moreover, the range of ideologies and interpretations within the Islamic tradition have given rise to a plurality of voices, presenting opportunities for constructive dialogue as well as challenges that demand thoughtful examination. Throughout the pages of this volume, readers will encounter a plethora of insightful analyses and fresh ideas that shed light on the complex interactions between transnational Islam and the contemporary world. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, understanding these dynamics becomes paramount for fostering a more informed and empathetic global community.

Overall, the chapters in this book are like pieces of a puzzle, each revealing a unique part of the big picture. Together, they show us how Muslims from Turkey and Greece to Malaysia, Indonesia, and beyond are linked by their faith and the complexities of the modern world. However, this book does not aim to address only concepts, theories, and ideas. It also proposes to look at Muslims' concrete experiences which, from the journey of Turkish pilgrims to the struggles of Rohingya refugees, will help deepen an understanding of the state of today's Ummah, as well as its ongoing challenges. So, *Transnational Islam and Muslim Politics: Policies, Identities, and Ideologies* serves as a testament to the collective efforts of scholars and researchers from around the world who strive to deepen our understanding of transnational Islam and its manifold implications. Our hope is that this volume will serve as a valuable resource for academicians, policymakers, and other individuals interested in navigating the intricate terrain of transnational Islam and its role in shaping our shared future.

Ahmet Köroğlu
Baptiste Brodard

